

**System and Method For IEEE 802.1X User Authentication In A  
Network Entry Device**

ABSTRACT

A system and method to authenticate attached functions seeking access to network services through a network entry device. The system includes a relay function of the network entry device for forwarding authentication messages to a device having full IEEE Standard 802.1X Port Access Entity (PAE) functionality. The relay function directs authentication information to the PAE device to perform the authentication function pursuant to that standard. The relay function eliminates the need for the network entry device to operate as a PAE device. The relay function may forward the authentication messages in a form compatible with IEEE Standard 802.1D or IEEE Standard 802.1Q.